

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that, "the means for removing and guiding liquid-enriched fluid is arranged to admit all of the liquid-enriched fluid to the free inner space at a position within 30% of the spacing between upper and lower walls, counted from the lower wall." Support for the amendment is found in Claim 2 of the Application as originally filed.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 2, and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 38 32 420 (Fig. 1)(Artemov). To the extent the rejection applies to the amended claims, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Artemov teaches wet gas 2 entering vanes 11 and into lower tube 8. Dry gas 4 goes into upper tube 9, with wet gas going through space 10, and into partition 14, then into separation chamber 3. Liquids go to liquid outlet 5 at the bottom, with dry gas going to orifice 13 at the top.

Artemov does not teach or suggest the desirability of partition 14 extending to a position within 30% of the spacing between upper and lower walls, counted from the lower wall. Artemov's partition 14 is located at the mid-space between upper perforated plate 7 and lower perforated plate 6.

Applicant respectfully submits that the advantage of the invention in Claim 1 over Artemov may include one or more of the following: liquid can not reach the secondary gas outlets on a direct trajectory, maximized use of free inner space, increased time available for separation of entrained liquid, and/or longer travel distance for secondary gas. These and other advantages are discussed in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the Patent Application Publication.

Applicant respectfully submits that Artemov does not anticipate Claim 1 for at least the reasons stated above. Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 2 has been canceled and that Claim 5 depends from Claim 1 and is allowable for at least the same reasons.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection to Claims 1, 2, and 5.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 3, 4, and 6-8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 38 32 420 (Fig. 1)(Artemov) in view of EPO 0 048 508 (Schuurmans). To the extent the rejection applies to the amended claims, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that Schuurmans does not remedy the defects of Artemov discussed above. Schuurmans also teaches skirts 72 located at the mid-space of the free inner space, and not within 30% of the spacing between upper and lower walls, counted from the lower wall (Schuurmans, Figs. 6 and 7).

In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no motivation or suggestion to combine the teachings of Schuurmans with Artemov, as Schuurmans teaches secondary gas outlets 69 within skirts 72, which would allow wet gas from separating chamber 63 to “short circuit” directly to secondary gas outlet 69.

Applicant respectfully submits that Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness per MPEP Section 2142.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection to Claims 3, 4, and 6-8.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 9-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DE 38 32 420 (Fig. 1)(Artemov) in view of EPO 0 048 508 (Schuurmans), further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,626,799 (Sheinman). To the extent the rejection applies to the amended claims, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that Sheinman does not remedy the defects of Schuurmans and Artemov discussed above. Sheinman also does not teach a skirt at all.

In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that there is no motivation or suggestion to combine the teachings of Sheinman with Schuurmans and Artemov, as Sheinman is non-analogous art.

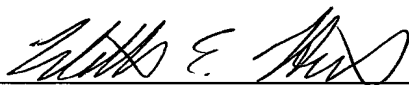
Applicant respectfully submits that Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness per MPEP Section 2142.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection to Claims 9-14.

For the reasons discussed above and in view of the amendments, all of claims 1-14 of the present application are believed to be patentable over the cited references. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
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